# Episode 18: Using Supplements Effectively in Law School

Alison Monahan: Hello and welcome to the Law School Toolbox podcast. Today we're going to be talking about a really important topic, how to use supplements. Your Law School Toolbox hosts are Alison Monahan, that's me, and Lee Burgess. We're here to demystify the law school and early legal career experience so you'll be the best law student and lawyer you can be.

We are the co creators of the Law School Toolbox, the Bar Exam Toolbox, the Catapult Conference, and the Trebuchet Legal Career Site. And I also run The Girl's Guide to Law School. If you enjoy the show, we'd really appreciate a review or rating on iTunes, and if you have any questions, do not hesitate to reach out to us.

You can always reach us via the contact form on LawSchoolToolbox.com, and we'd love to hear from you. And without further delay, let's get started.

Lee Burgess: Welcome back. Today we're talking about how to use supplements, which is a very useful topic for law students, whether you're a first year or a third year. First off, let's talk about why you might even want to use supplements. So what can they do for you? Alison, how do you think supplements are helpful?

Alison Monahan: Well, I think they can be helpful for a variety of reasons. And you can use them in different ways. I mean, one way is that they can give you sort of a big picture overview of the topic. So part of the challenge in law school is you read a bunch of individual cases and then somehow you're supposed to put those together.

And one of the ways that you can start putting it together is by reading a supplement, and we'll talk in a minute about the different types of supplements, but you know, they can give you sort of a roadmap to the topic. But another thing they can do is fill in the missing details. So maybe you have a pretty good understanding in general, but you don't have that element by element sort of understanding that you really need to be able to use the law on an exam.

So those are kind of two of the main things I see. Do you have other ideas?

Lee Burgess: Yeah, I also think it can just be nice to read a supplement for a very direct explanation of the substance of law. Sometimes I think law students, including myself when I was in law school, would leave class kind of shaking their head, going, I have no idea what just happened.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, that's, I think that's a really good point. It could be nice, it's almost, because you know, we sometimes talk about class in law school as like a lecture,

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but it's not really a lecture. It's not a lecture in the way that, lecture as an undergraduate where someone would actually explain a topic to you.

You know, they come in and they'd be like, okay, you know, here's what we're talking about today and here's the roadmap and here are the details. Law school's not really like that, so. I think that's a really good point, that it can give you almost like a lecture, really, I mean, particularly depending on which type of supplement you use, but it can give you almost like that lecture type of overview of like, here is the law, which can be really helpful.

Lee Burgess: It can, and very, like, calming, I think, to some law students too, who are feeling like the, You know, they can't even begin to figure out what is this law that they're supposed to understand to put in an outline. So I found myself using supplements after class to kind of piece together things that were kind of hazy from class was my favorite way to use supplements.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, you know, I've been talking to a number of law students at this point in the semester, first years particularly, who are sort of like, I have no idea what I'm supposed to be writing down in class, like nothing the professor's saying is coherent, like, what do I do?

And my question is usually, well, do you have a good supplement? Because I would suggest you go read the topic area in the supplement to get a sense of what it is that you're supposed to be taking away. from your cases in the classes.

Lee Burgess: But I think it is important that we remind students, though, that supplements can't do everything for you.

Alison Monahan: Really?

Lee Burgess: I know, isn't that so unfortunate?

Alison Monahan: So, such a bummer.

Lee Burgess: If we could figure out how to write the supplement that could answer all questions ever asked by law students, we'd be really rich. We would. We wouldn't, you know, we wouldn't need to be doing this podcast, I don't know. Not that this podcast is, you know, making us any money.

Alison Monahan: So what do you think, well, I mean, what do you think a supplement could not do for you?

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Lee Burgess: So the thing about the supplements which can be kind of frustrating is they can't really share with you what the professor thinks is important. And I think one of the things that students get frustrated with is they might read a supplement and say, well that's not how my professor talked about that area of the law, or that's not exactly how they presented it.

And so they want to, you know, go with what the supplement says, and that's a huge mistake. Huge mistake.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, and sometimes people are like, well, should I write down, like, you know, should I use what my professor talked about, or should I use what, you know, the supplement said? It's like, well, which, which one of those do you think you should use?

Because which one of those people is grading your test?

Lee Burgess: Exactly, exactly. The word of the professor is just gold.

Alison Monahan: So I don't care what your professor is telling you. They could be making stuff up. If they tell you something is the law, you write it down as the law.

Lee Burgess: Exactly. So I mean, that's kind of can be frustrating, but I still think, you know, supplements can be worthwhile.

You know, sometimes it's good to talk to either TAs or upperclassmen about some of your professors, because there are certain professors that I had where people would say, do not read a supplement, it is not going to help you.

Alison Monahan: Right, some of them are super idiosyncratic. You know, particularly in classes like torts or something that are pretty policy based, you know, you might get a professor that spends literally like half the semester talking about, you know, some sort of like the hand theory of torts or like, you know, is just really obsessed with a particular topic.

And you're not going to find that. In a supplement.

Lee Burgess: No.

Alison Monahan: I mean they might have a paragraph, but they're not gonna have the level of detail that you've gone into and you need to know for the exam.

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Lee Burgess: Exactly. Right. So the other problem is students really want the supplements to give them the answer, you know, of how they're supposed to do their legal analysis or what's the answer on the exam.

And unfortunately supplements can't do legal analysis for you, as much as, again, if we could figure out how to write that supplements. Oh my gosh.

Alison Monahan: But we would be really doing well.

Lee Burgess: We would be really, really doing well, but you know, you just have to realize that they serve a purpose and they can be helpful, but they're not going to.

Help you skirt around the difficult work, which is learning how to apply the law to a fact pattern.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, and I think that's a, I mean, you know, I think the point is they're a first step, but they're not gonna get you, you know, the a on the test because the supplement cannot teach you how to, you know, how to, how to write about the law. I can't teach you how to apply the facts to the law. And sometimes I think people get so hung up on knowing every single detail. You know, I mean, look, the average supplement in a 1L class is probably two to 300 pages.

Lee Burgess: Mm-Hmm.

Alison Monahan: There's a ton of information you do not need to know in every single one of those.

And sometimes people just sort of try to memorize them. Like, if I just know everything that's in here, I'll be okay. And that's not really the point. The point is, do you have a structure of the law? Do you know enough law? That you can actually analyze a question with it.

Lee Burgess: Mm-Hmm.

Alison Monahan: And you, you know, that's what you need to be working on, not memorizing every detail from page 88 of like Glennon's.

Lee Burgess: Right. Although Glennon is very good, but that's still not gonna get you, you know, the perfect score on the exam.

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Alison Monahan: Yeah. I mean it's, you know, it's a starting point. Like you have to know the law, but the law is a starting point. And if you find yourself like trying to memorize supplements and thinking that's gonna help, it's not really gonna help.

Lee Burgess: No. And I think the problem becomes reading supplements. It, it can be almost comforting because a lot of what students don't like to do is what we call the deep thinking tasks. And if you've been listening to this podcast, you have heard this before and you might be saying, yeah, yeah, yeah, I get it. Yeah.

Alison Monahan: Move on.

Lee Burgess: Move on. But we keep talking about it because this is what we end up talking to students about so much. And you know, the deep thinking work is the hard work. It makes you uncomfortable. It involves doing a practice test. It involves really questioning whether or not you understand the law and.

Reading a supplement doesn't do that. Reading a supplement's, like checking a box, like, oh, I read that chapter on intentional torts. I'm good.

Alison Monahan: I'm good. And it can also, you know, it can also lead to information overload because sometimes people are reading, you know, multiple commercial outlines or something like that, and they're saying like, you know, if I, maybe there's something in like.

You know, and Gilbert's that is not in Glennon's, and maybe Emanuel has something that's not in these two, and it's like, yeah, maybe they do, but how important do you think that is?

Lee Burgess: Right. Yes, and I think that students can get obsessed with comparing the supplements or spending time reading supplements instead of actually studying, and then they end up reading about a bunch of stuff that wasn't covered in your class.

I mean, professors cannot talk about absolutely everything in each one of these. Substantive Classes, especially 1L Year, there's so much, like in torts, oh my gosh, you know, you could just keep going with torts for semesters.

Alison Monahan: Law professors spend entire careers writing about like certain areas of law. There's always more you could do.

But I think the key takeaway here is, you know, anything that was not covered in your class cannot be on your exam. So ignore it. You should not be wasting time

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reading. I mean, unless you're just curious and you want to confuse yourself and waste time, like go for it.

Lee Burgess: Hey, save that for winter break.

Alison Monahan: Exactly. Save that till after Christmas. It's your Christmas present to yourself. You can finish reading the supplements. Yeah. So, yeah, I think, you know, you've got to, you've got to be judicious here and that can give you this false sense of security, like, oh, I know everything in the law of torts, but it's like, like we talked about, if your professor doesn't cover a topic, or your professor's obsessed with some very idiosyncratic piece of the course, that's what you need to be worrying about, not the sort of, like, bar, you know, it's almost like the bar exam level of the law is what's in these supplements.

Lee Burgess: Yeah, exactly. And just one more time, Just because it's in the supplement doesn't mean that's what your professor cares about. So you really have to, you know, use the supplement to support what your professor is saying in class, is saying in office hours, and, you know, match it up with your supplement. I'm sorry, match it up with your syllabus.

You know, if you're reading the supplement and it's talking about a bunch of cases that weren't in your syllabus, you know, red lights should be flashing. You should stop reading and wasting your time doing that and compare your syllabus and make sure you're only reading discussions about stuff that were actually discussed as part of your class.

Alison Monahan: Right, and a lot of the big commercial outlines are keyed to your casebook. So if you've been assigned, you know, pages 31 through 52 in your casebook, you can kind of get a sense of like, oh, this is the part of the supplement that's covering those topics. And that's what I should be looking at.

So you mentioned that you like to use supplements after class. I mean, talk a little bit more about that. Did you do it like the same day and a week? And what are some other times that people might want to use them?

Lee Burgess: Well, I liked doing it after class and during my kind of deep thinking study time. So if I was working on outlines or we just reached kind of the end of a section and I was still confused, I remember specifically the first time I heavily needed to rely on a supplement, was reading about the parole evidence rule in contracts, which I think a lot of people forget.

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Alison Monahan: I'm like, I don't really remember what that is, but I'm having a bar exam flashback.

Lee Burgess: So the parole evidence rule, if you've not studied it yet, can be quite confusing. There are different theories and it's all about whether or not evidence of an agreement outside the four corners of the contract, whatever, it doesn't matter.

Anyway it can be very confusing to some folks, and it was confusing to me, and I remember pulling an example and explanations off the reserve desk in the library, and really reading the section on parole evidence, and at the end being like, Oh, that's what she was trying to say in class? And then I went back to my notes, and as I kind of compared it, I was like, oh, that was kind of what she was saying.

Talking about in class, I mean, I could pull out like the phrases or the, you know, the terminology right? And it helped me kind of piece together what had happened. And so to me, the supplement was almost like a secondary lecture on, you know, an issue that had been covered in class. I think before class can be helpful.

But I think for me, where I've seen that be a pitfall for students is this issue with covering too much. Information that's not going to be covered in your class, and you don't really know what your professor thinks is important before class. So some people, I think, like it as kind of a big picture road map of the subject, but I think you can get a little carried away by spending too much time in the supplement and then it almost, you know, trying to fit what happens in class into what was discussed in the supplement instead of the other way around, if that makes sense.

Alison Monahan: No, I think it does make sense. I mean, I think I can see a value in people reviewing like the, the relevant section of a supplement before class, but I think there are some potential pitfalls. You know, someone who's like very anxious about class and very anxious about being called on. It could make them feel better to be like, Oh, I basically understand, you know what's going on.

Or if you're a really a big pitcher thinker. You know, to have that overview. But I think you, you know, you have to take it sort of with a grain of salt.

Lee Burgess: Mm-Hmm.

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Alison Monahan: And be looking for like, okay, you know, I read 10 pages on this, eight of them. My professor has not mentioned anything that was in them, but we've really focused on these other two.

So I think it can help sort of frame, you know, your understanding of class. But I could also, frankly, make it sort of boring. I mean, you know, if you, if you kind of, you know, if you've read the cases, you've read a supplement, you're just like, why am I even going to class? And the answer is to find out how your professor thinks.

Lee Burgess: Right. And to practice your legal analysis skills that happen in a Socratic dialogue. One group of books that I would not consider to be supplements are canned briefs, you know, you can buy, I'm sure that some of you've seen them in the library, these books that are keyed off your casebook that are just commercial briefs, I guess, is that what we would call them, Alison?

Why am I not thinking about what to call them?

Alison Monahan: Yeah, no, I think they're canned briefs or commercial briefs, yeah. I think those were, I mean, I tried like one of those and I thought it was terrible.

Lee Burgess: They can be really terrible. And I think some students think that they can just read them. These are one page, really quick and dirty.

Alison Monahan: It's like the Cliff Notes.

Lee Burgess: Cliff Notes about cases in your casebook. And again, like, I guess if you didn't do the reading at all and you want to have some clue of what was happening in class, you can review them, but students relying on these instead of struggling with material, it is very problematic because although reading for class can be frustrating at times, Reading legal cases and learning how to extract important information from them is what lawyers do, most of them, in practice.

And so doing that exercise before class is actually a skill. And so cheating yourself out of practicing that skill is not only going to hurt your legal analysis as a whole, which is likely going to be reflected on your exam, but you're cheating yourself out of learning how to be a lawyer.

Alison Monahan: Which is sort of the point of going to law school.

Lee Burgess: And why you're paying all this money to go to law school.

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Alison Monahan: No, I mean, you know, I I think in my case, I remember one time, like, I can't remember if I bought or borrowed from a friend, like, some canned briefs, but it was like some special situation, and it goes to 2L, you know, it was like, I'm interviewing, I don't have time to do the reading, I'm running around for law review, and so for like a week, I read the canned briefs and property or whatever, for some reason they made us take that as a 2L And yeah, I was like, these are horrible.

Like, they're really badly written. I can clearly not get, you know, because they're picking out, you know, 10 page case, they're picking out the page or two that they think whoever wrote this thinks is useful. And it may or may not be what you think is useful or what your professor thinks is useful. So, you know, I think, you know, Again, like, maybe those have a purpose if you really have no idea, like, what's going on in the cases in a particular class.

But at this point in the semester, I mean, hopefully that's not the case. If it is, you kind of have bigger problems.

Lee Burgess: Yeah.

Alison Monahan: Which are not going to be solved by using canned brief.

Lee Burgess: Right. Did you use CliffsNotes, like, in high school when you were doing reading in high school?

Alison Monahan: Again, occasionally. Yeah. If I just really didn't have time to read the book.

Lee Burgess: Yeah, I mean, I remember reading them. Like, sometimes after I would read the book, because maybe I would be, you know, I might be struggling with what exactly was the takeaway from one section, or I just found it interesting to see what the CliffsNotes people thought the takeaway was, versus what I thought the takeaway was, and again, it's, I think some of these supplements are the same thing, there's just one professor's take or one take on the material.

And remember, your professor's take on the material is most important.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, although it should go without saying, if your professor wrote a supplement, you should have that supplement.

Lee Burgess: Oh, yes. Good point.

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Alison Monahan: Don't even think twice. It'll be the best, like, 30 or 40 dollars you ever spent. They're basically telling you how to think about the law.

Lee Burgess: Exactly. Is Professor Glennon out there still teaching? I don't know.

Alison Monahan: I don't know, but occasionally you do run across, you know, your professor has written a supplement on this topic area, and it's like, you definitely want to have that book.

Lee Burgess: Yes, very true.

Alison Monahan: All right, well, the other, I mean, so basically we talked about before class, after class, sort of while outlining.

I mean, some people like to use them immediately after class if you kind of get out of class and you're just like, wow, like, what was that? And I think while outlining is, you know, a very obvious place to use a supplement. If you're going to start your outline, you probably want to have. Some sort of commercial supplement with you.

And again, like during exam prep, so after you've done your outlines, you've taken some practice exams, that's another good time to sort of circle back. Is there anything you need to fill in? And a lot of these actually have practice problems, so that's another good use of them.

Lee Burgess: Agreed. Yeah, I think I always had a supplement with me when I was outlining because sometimes your outlining is where you realize you have no idea what the law is, so.

Alison Monahan: Totally, like, you'll get to a point and just be like, wait, what exactly is the assumption of risk? Yeah. I don't really, like, I remember we talked about it, but what is it about? I don't know.

Lee Burgess: And I think sometimes the same thing will happen during exam prep. I may remember specifically studying for constitutional law and I got an exam question or a practice exam question that was about the intersection of where fundamental rights and the Equal Protection Clause kind of cross over and how they relate to each other. I mean, it's not that complicated and now, see here, I like want to explain it to you on this podcast and I won't do that.

But Because I just get really excited about constitutional law, but I was really confused and I tried to do this practice question and I was just really confused

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and there's this phenomenal Constitutional law supplement written by Professor Chimerinsky, who is now the Dean of Irving University of Irvine Law School and it's If you are taking constitutional law, you should have this book.

Alison Monahan: Yes, yes, it will definitely be in our listed resources.

Lee Burgess: But anyway, so I had this book. It's quite large. It doesn't matter. Just buy it, carry it with you everywhere. It's fantastic. And he had a section of a few paragraphs that explained how this, you know, the situation should be dealt with that I'd seen in this practice question.

I just remember reading that page over and over again until it made sense. It was so funny. I was like, no, I still don't get it. No, I still don't get it. I think like the fourth time I read it, I was like, oh.

Alison Monahan: Oh, that's what he means.

Lee Burgess: You know, and it was almost like he was going to lecture me during my exam prep, which was a good thing because that, yeah, it was a very aha moment, which was good because if I remember correctly, that was also on my exam.

So using those supplements to help clarify these substantive problems while you're working on practice exams is very helpful, especially if you can't get in to talk to your professor close to exam time.

Alison Monahan: Definitely. Well, now let's talk about some different types of supplements because there are actually several different categories and they are useful for different purposes.

So first off, I mean, usually when I think about a supplement, the very first thing that comes to mind is some sort of commercial outline. And the big three here are the Gilbert's, the Glennon's, and the Emanuel's. And these are basically outlines, You know, just like you would see in a Word doc with, you know, indentations and letters and whatever.

And they basically are designed to sort of explain the law to you, but not in a narrative format. It's really bullet points. It's pretty brief. Do you have any thoughts on how to pick a different, which one to pick?

Lee Burgess: I think it's important to look at all of them and see what looks familiar based on what you're learning in class.

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I think a lot of students sometimes go out and just try and buy supplements just to have them, I guess, as security blankets of some sort. But,

Alison Monahan: Yeah, you're not going to learn by osmosis.

Lee Burgess: No, exactly. You can actually read them, but you should flip through them and see if they resonate with you. I definitely remember early in my 1L year purchasing a Gilbert supplements on contracts and it didn't really match my class at all.

Even the language, it just didn't feel like it matched my class and so I didn't end up really using it.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, and I think sometimes it's helpful to actually go to the bookstore. You know, your old school campus bookstore, and oftentimes they'll have, like, you know, the big supplements, and you can just flip through them and kind of, you know, pick the one that makes the most sense to you.

If you can't decide, I would just pick the one that's most recent.

Lee Burgess: Also, your library may have a reserve section with supplements too, and you can go through and look at all the different ones that way.

Alison Monahan: That's a great idea. I mean, that's a good way to save money. Another way to save money is people can share them, you know, among your study group or your friends.

I mean, there you want to make sure that you don't have like 10 people trying to share one that you're going to all want the day before the exam, but you know, within reason, a couple of friends, you can each buy one. I mean, on Amazon, you can also sort of rent one. So, you know, you can often buy them and save 10 or 20 by sending it back at the end.

So these are options because the things, I mean, they do add up pretty quickly.

Lee Burgess: For sure. And then my personal favorite, and one of your favorites as well, are the Examples and Explanations series, which I-

Alison Monahan: Yeah, so how, how is that different from like a commercial outline?

Lee Burgess: Examples and Explanations feels more like a narrative lecture.

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They have some sort of explanation of the law written in paragraph form. And then after that, they go through a series of examples where they give you fact patterns to kind of test your knowledge and then they explain them, examples and explanations. So, I think for a lot of students they like this somewhat interactive element to it, because the, kind of hypo and explanation of the hypo.

Exercise feels a lot like what happens in class, and it can kind of help them parse out what they understand and what they don't understand.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, I think they're really helpful. It's a more active form of learning. The one thing I would caution students is the examples and explanations standing alone is probably insufficient.

Because they're not going to have every detail of every element, the way that you might be able to look something up in a commercial outline.

Lee Burgess: It's true.

Alison Monahan: And it's just, and you know, it's, it's good if you need an overview, but it's not so good if you have a very, very specific question and you wanna just flip to the page and find it the way that you can in a commercial outline.

Lee Burgess: And again, you have to be smart about. Whether these supplements are going to work for your class. So, literally, I probably owned almost every examples and explanations for most of my classes, the ones that they they made. And I remember looking at one for criminal law, but I went to law school in California and they actually taught California criminal law in my criminal law class.

Well, California criminal law is not in examples and explanations.

Alison Monahan: Right.

Lee Burgess: They teach the model penal code. And so it was very important for me not to spend a lot of time reading examples and explanations because that wasn't going to help me.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, and I think that's right. You always have to be, you know, you have to critically evaluate, is this going to help me or not?

Yeah, it's funny. I only, I got the two, the big two examples and explanations, the Civ Pro and the Torts that I think everyone and their brother has, and I love them, but I never really found it. I never really liked any of the other ones that

are written by different people. So that's another thing to keep in mind is even within a series, you know, different people are writing different books typically.

So some of them might resonate with you and some of them might not.

Lee Burgess: Yes. But that Glennon's on CivPro, that's a great one. We still have that on our bookcases. I just unpacked it after I moved actually. It was like, hi, Glennon, how are you?

Alison Monahan: No, both the CivPro and the Torts. I mean, there's, those are the only, definitely the CivPro though.

I was. Absolutely without a clue what was going on in that class and ended up being a TA after reading the examples and explanations.

Lee Burgess: And he actually has two on, he has his examples and explanations, and then he's got one that's based on multiple choice questions as well. We'll link to both of these in the notes.

But both of them are good, I think. You're safe with either one.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, you're good.

Lee Burgess: And we've already talked about kind of narrative books or treatises, these are probably like, Heavy, feel more like a weapon, but they still have a lot of good information on that. And this Chimerinsky on con law that I'm talking about definitely falls into this category.

What are some of your other favorites in this category, Allison?

Alison Monahan: Well, personally, the only reason I passed contracts was because of the little book that Marvin Stein wrote on contracts. It's the one with the boat on the front of it will link to all of these, but I remember. Going to my roommate's house in Pennsylvania for Thanksgiving and reading that on the way down on the train and then reading it all weekend and reading it on the way back and kind of be like, oh, oh, maybe, maybe this does sort of make sense because I just had no idea what was going on in that class.

Lee Burgess: Yeah, I think that's the thing. You kind of need to talk to people and see if there are some good ones that are really popular at your school. But you have to see what resonates with you because sometimes you'll pick up one of these books and be like, I can't read this. Yeah. It's not working for me.

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Alison Monahan: No, that was kind of like me with getting to maybe, which is not really a supplement, but it's like about taking exams. I was so excited and I picked it up and was like, what in God's name are these people talking about?

Lee Burgess: Yeah. Yeah.

Alison Monahan: And I read it later, you know, and it was like, oh, this was, this was super helpful.

But at the time, like, it just did not make sense to me.

Lee Burgess: Then we've also got other series. I think Nutshells is one the Crunch Time series is another one. Yeah. There's one on, you name your subject for dummies.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, exactly. And so, again, like, some of these are going to be great, some of them are going to be terrible, some of them are going to help you, some of them will help your friend, but they're not going to help you.

Like, you just have to, you know, you have to sort of check some things out. I mean, you can always go on Amazon, you can read the reviews, typically speaking, if a book is very highly reviewed and everyone's raving about how it saved their life, it's probably pretty useful. If, you know, if the average reviews are like, eh, wasn't really that helpful, chances are you're not going to find it that helpful either.

So you can talk to upper class students, but you can also look online and you can get a lot of information that way.

Lee Burgess: Exactly. The other thing to think about is what your exam looks like. I know that some students, especially who are studying for multiple choice exams, are always hunting for multiple choice questions, and sometimes supplements will actually include multiple choice questions in them which can be another way to study.

I know that the crunch time books sometimes have multiple choice questions in them, but it's just something for you to kind of, when you flip through them, think about. If you know you've got a multiple choice exam, maybe you want a supplement or one of the supplements to also include, include multiple choice questions.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, because if you have multiple choice, you ought to be practicing those.

Lee Burgess: Yes, bar questions are also a great way to practice multiple choice for these core 1L classes. Just throwing that out there.

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Alison Monahan: And there are also a lot of people like the Cali lessons, which are sort of like supplements. You can get the password from the law library and they're kind of structured, you know, interactive sort of modules basically on your different topics, that's another way to go.

You can also find, speaking of the library, you can also find, Horn Books on different topics. And Horn Books are basically kind of like supplements for lawyers. It's what when you're a practicing lawyer and someone asks you to go research a question that you have absolutely no idea about, typically, this is where you're going to start, you know, and so this is not something you would typically buy because they're extremely expensive, like thousands of dollars, but your library will have all of the main supplements you know, all of the main Horn books.

So things like Prosser on torts is a classic. We'll go through some more in a minute. But you can basically ask the law librarian, like, I want a Horn book on contracts. Can you point me in the right direction?

Lee Burgess: Yep, exactly. And law librarians are great resources just generally when it comes to looking for any sort of a resource to help answer these questions.

So, you should talk to them. They work at your school. They know a lot, and a lot about the professors, and a lot about how things work.

Alison Monahan: And they're being paid to help you, so you may as well take advantage.

Lee Burgess: Yeah, exactly.

Alison Monahan: So, before we close, let's talk a little bit about our personal favorites for different classes.

And most of these will be 1L classes, but I think we can throw in our own personal favorites in our other classes if we have it. I guess overall, my advice to people is that they get at least one good commercial outline. Either the Gilbert's, that they at least have access to that for pretty much every class.

And again, go to the bookstore, flip through them, look on Amazon, but you want to have one of those, and then you can kind of supplement, ha ha. You can supplement your studying with other types of supplements.

Lee Burgess: Oh, how many times can we say supplements? I know, really.

Alison Monahan: Isn't English a great language? It is.

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So for CivPro, I mean, for CivPro, I think you definitely want the examples and explanations. Beyond that. There's the sort of what lawyers would use, Hornbook, would be Wright and Miller. So, you know, any judge has the entire Wright and Miller series on his bookshelf, any, like, litigator. You know, if you really have a question you need to drill down into, you can go there, but typically it's not going to be necessary as a 1L.

Lee Burgess: Yeah, nothing to add there. I think those are your best resources. All right, what about torts? Okay, torts. I also like the E& E for torts. Prosser and Torts is really well known, and then you know, always feel free to ask your professor. Sometimes professors really like individual supplements as well.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, but also be careful if you talk to your professor about supplements, because they might go on a rampage and a rant and tell you never to use them and that you're going to definitely fail. All of that's a lie, so just tread carefully when you're asking them.

Lee Burgess: And thank them for their advice and then go back to the bookstore and look at them anyway.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, exactly. Buy one anyway. Just hide it, you know, put some brown paper wrapping if you have to carry it around.

Lee Burgess: Exactly. For contracts, I liked the E& E on contracts. It clearly saved me with oral evidence. And then I know the Chorlestein book you so lovingly talk about. What else for contracts is helpful?

Alison Monahan: Well the main the main horn book is gonna be Corbin, probably. I was introduced to that the summer after my first year where I was working at a litigation firm in New York and the guy asked me to research something and I was like, oh, you mean on Westlaw? And he sort of looked at me, he's like, did they not tell you about the library?

And I was like, No, not really. And so he literally took me to our law library and pointed me to the shelf of Corbin on Contracts. He's like, If I ask you a contacts question, this is where you start doing research. I was like, What is this? I've never seen this before. And he was like, Oh, my God, what are they teaching you?

But the reality is Corbin on Contracts, pretty short for Hornbook, but really useful.

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Lee Burgess: Nice. I've already discussed my love affair with Chimerinsky's book on constitutional law.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, I don't, I don't think anyone gets through that or gets through fed courts, where he also does another version of a supplement without the Chimerinsky.

Again, if you're taking con law, make sure you have access to this book.

Lee Burgess: Okay, can I tell my funny Chimerinsky story about the bar exam and studying for the bar? So Chimerinsky was the lecturer for Barbary in California when I took the bar, and I believe his lecture was three days long. I know, which is really, really long.

And of course, you know, we all deeply loved him for his book and had read his textbook. And he did all of his lectures from memory with no notes.

Alison Monahan: Wow.

Lee Burgess: Yeah. He apparently has a photographic memory.

Alison Monahan: That's crazy.

Lee Burgess: Yeah. And so he just. It was like he was reciting an outline. It was unbelievable. It was somewhat boring, I'll be honest.

Alison Monahan: It sounds horribly tedious.

Lee Burgess: It was very tedious, but it was such an incredible feat. They did the whole thing on video with no notes whatsoever.

Alison Monahan: Wow. Yeah. Yeah. I'm just sitting here thinking like, God, I don't think I studied three days for con law, like for the bar in any of the jurisdiction. I mean, I know I didn't for any jurisdiction I took it in.

I was like, God, what a waste of time, but Hey, good for him. The supplements are great. They're really well done. And they're pretty, they're pretty condensed. They're not just like rambling lectures.

Lee Burgess: No, they're not. But because they are so large, again, make sure you only read the sections that Correlate to what was talked in your class.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, I mean, the average con law class is probably not going to cover at least half of what's in the book.

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Lee Burgess: For sure. Now, property is a tough one, because I think that property where people really want the support are estates, you know, future interests and things like that. And that is a tough one, because professors teach estates in a very specific way sometimes.

And so I know in my, Class when I was working, well, I was in my one L year. My professor had a very specific way to teach estates, and when folks would go off and read supplements and bring her questions from supplements, she would get very frustrated because she's like, that's not what we're talking about.

This is outside of the scope. So for that, I'm just gonna warn you to be very careful to stay within the scope of your class. And for Estates, specifically, I would study the materials released by your professors or the questions prevent, presented by your professor and make sure you really understand those before going off and kind of diving headfirst into this sea of practice that may not actually be what your professor wants you to learn.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, I think property is a tough one. I don't think I ever found a very good supplement. I remember getting one from Lexis or something that was kind of pretty mediocre. Yeah, I think there's a market opportunity on this one because as far as I know there's not a great property supplement for 1Ls out there.

Lee Burgess: No, my one tip will be for estates, flow charts can be very, very helpful. So if your professor is not providing you with flow charts, try and make a flow chart. So when you're trying to figure out what to categorize the estate as or classify the estate, you kind of go through all of these questions and decision points.

I think struggling with something like that, working on that with your study group. could be a better use of time than just reading piles of supplements.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, I made like a diagram that everything fit on one page of like, you know, what's the estate, and what's what what do you end up with afterwards? And so, you know, once you can start doing that, I think you can start really understanding the material, but it's a tough area, and I don't think there's a really like, a well known fantastic supplement out there.

Lee Burgess: But if somebody is a supplement writer And it's listening to this.

Here you go.

Alison Monahan: Here you go.

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Lee Burgess: Opportunity.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, the one other one I'll mention, if you're taking patents, there's Chisholm on patents, which is what every lawyer uses. And that, and that's actually quite well written. It's pretty easy to follow. So, you know, if you're not understanding the difference between like, novelty and invalidity, go and look on Chisholm and he will explain it to you.

Lee Burgess: Oh, and one thing we didn't add to this list was evidence, which I think is another class a lot people struggle with. I think the ENE in evidence is pretty good, but evidence is one of those classes that just a great commercial outline can be helpful, because you really just need to focus on understanding what's required for that elementary rule and then, you know, practice applying it.

But evidence can be one where you probably want a high quality supplement and practice is so important that a supplement with practice questions can be great. But be careful if you go to school in California. The California Bar teaches or tests California evidence as well, and if your class teaches California evidence it is not the same as the federal rules of evidence.

So do not use a federal rules supplement if your class is requiring you to learn California evidence.

Alison Monahan: Yeah. Aren't there like rudder guides or something in California that lawyers use? Are those relevant here?

Lee Burgess: You know, I think they're a little more in depth. Okay. You know, I think for, really for the California law, a good bar outline is a great way to get the rules laid out for you and how they fit together.

Alison Monahan: Definitely.

Lee Burgess: Yeah.

Alison Monahan: All right. Well, if that, unfortunately, we're out of time. We hope that you've gotten some good tips on supplements. You can feel free to leave your favorites in the comments or whatnot, or let us know if you think we missed one. If you enjoyed this episode, please take a second and leave us a review and rating on iTunes.

We would really appreciate it. And you can subscribe so you won't miss anything. If you have any questions or comments, please don't hesitate to reach

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out to Lee and Alison at Lee, L E E, or Alison, A L I S O N, @LawSchoolToolbox.com, or you can always contact us via our website contact form at LawSchoolToolbox.com. Thanks for listening, and we'll talk soon.